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CDC Health Advisory

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Outbreak of *Botulism* Associated with Canned Chili, July 2007

Public health officials in Indiana, Texas, and at CDC are investigating an outbreak of botulism associated with canned hot dog chili sauce manufactured by Castleberry's Food Company.

Foodborne botulism is a rare but serious paralytic illness caused by consuming foods that contain botulinum toxin, a nerve toxin that is produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*.

Due to possible contamination with botulinum toxin, CDC, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) are advising persons not to eat certain canned food products manufactured by Castleberry's Food Company. These include certain Castleberry's brands as well as products distributed under other brand names. The recall includes some canned dog food. A listing of the recalled products can be found at the following websites:

http://www.castleberrys.com/news_productrecall.asp (for all products)

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html> (for FDA-regulated products)

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/index.asp (for USDA-regulated products)

Other foods that should be discarded are

- those recalled products with missing or unreadable "best by" dates;
- foods that may have been prepared with a recalled product;
- canned chili sauce, chili, beef stew, hash, corned beef hash, barbecue pork, barbecue beef, chip beef, Brunswick stew, sausage gravy or canned dog food of any unknown brand.

As of July 21, 2007, four cases of botulism have been reported to CDC from Indiana (2 cases) and Texas (2 cases). Onset dates range from June 29 to July 9, 2007. All four persons were reported to have consumed Castleberry's brand Hot Dog Chili Sauce Original. Botulinum toxin was identified in leftover chili sauce from an unlabeled sealable bag collected from a patient's refrigerator.

CDC OutbreakNet (the network of epidemiologists and other public health officials, facilitated by CDC, who investigate outbreaks of foodborne, waterborne, and other enteric illnesses nationwide) staff shared this information with colleagues at the FDA. After being informed about the outbreak by the FDA, the company that manufactures the Castleberry's brand Hot Dog Chili Sauce and other products issued a [voluntary recall](#) on July 18, 2007. The recall was expanded on July 21.

Persons with signs or symptoms of botulism who have eaten Castleberry's brand Hot Dog Chili Sauce or any of the other recalled products are advised to immediately contact their health care provider. These include new onset of double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred

speech, difficulty swallowing, or muscle weakness. If untreated, the illness may progress from head to toe, with paralysis of the face, arms, breathing muscles, trunk, and legs. Symptoms generally begin 18 to 36 hours after eating a contaminated food, but they can occur as early as 6 hours or as late as 10 days. Health care providers evaluating persons with signs of botulism should contact their State health department immediately. CDC provides 24/7 consultation on botulism to State health departments.

Additional information can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/botulism/botulism.htm>

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